

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I'm writing to urge you to support the proposed merger between EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics. I believe the merger holds tremendous potential for my company in Lipan, TX which sells EchoStar's DISH Network satellite TV service. The new company will offer a more attractive product to consumers, and this will mean more business for my company.

The majority of my customers are not able to subscribe to their local broadcast channels via satellite because they live in a small television market. This is the case because DISH Network does not have sufficient spectrum to provide all local channels in every one of the country's 210 local television markets. Currently, EchoStar offers local broadcast channels in only 36 markets. The merger will allow the combined company to stop broadcasting more than 500 identical TV channels. This will increase capacity and allow the new company to serve all TV markets in the U.S. This will allow me to offer my customers a more competitive alternative to cable in the near future.

If the merger is approved, the new EchoStar will provide consumers in my area an affordable high speed Internet access service via satellite. There are a small number of customers in my area who do enjoy access to high-speed Internet access service via cable and DSL service. For them, this merger will result in increased competition in the broadband market, potentially driving down prices of DSL and cable providers. However, the majority of the homes, schools and businesses in my area are beyond the reach of cable and DSL wires. For these customers, the new EchoStar would be their only chance of getting an affordable high speed Internet service.

Because none of my customers currently have access to cable, they depend on satellite TV for their pay-TV service. The merger will bring to rural areas the benefits of competition with cable in the most competitive markets, because EchoStar will offer its service and price on a nationwide basis. The competition between the new EchoStar and hundreds of cable companies across the country will mean that the television product I sell will always have the best programming choices and latest innovations

Since its inception, direct broadcast satellite TV providers have offered uniform, nationwide pricing structures, and the new company has guaranteed that it will continue this practice. Nationwide pricing offers customers in rural America the full benefits of the rigorous competition occurring in urban and suburban areas. I can rest assured that satellite TV will remain a competitively priced product.

The merged company will provide consumers with a lot of new services, but the availability of an affordable, nationwide high-speed Internet access product in

the near future is the most important one to me. It is for this reason that I urge you to support the merger of EchoStar and Hughes Electronics.

Sincerely,

Johnny McBride
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